

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4 – 6, 8 – 10, 12 – 15 and 17 – 25 are pending in the present application, wherein claims 21 – 25 are newly added. Claims 2, 3, 7, 11 and 16 are canceled by the present amendment. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

In item 1 of the Office Action, claims 3 – 11 and 14 – 19 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form. Applicant is canceling claims 3, 7, 11 and 16, and amending claims 4, 6, 8 – 10, 14, 15 and 17 – 19 to address this objection. A withdrawal of the 37 CFR 1.75(c) objection is respectfully solicited.

In item 2 of the Office Action, claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Applicant is amending claim 1 so that it recites “superimposing a reference signal with the component signal to provide a superimposed signal.” A withdrawal of the section 112 rejection is respectfully requested.

In item 4 of the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 12, 13 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,528,367 to Putnam et al. (hereinafter “the Putnam et al. patent”). This set of rejected claims contains three independent claims, namely claims 1, 12 and 20. Applicant is clarifying an aspect of claims 1, 12 and 20 that is neither disclosed by nor inherently present in the Putnam et al. patent.

Claim 1 provides for a method that includes, *inter alia*, providing a load signal to an optical component, wherein the load signal is periodic, and has a period having a time interval during which the load signal is present at the optical component, and a time interval during which the load signal is not present.

The Putnam et al. patent, FIG. 5, is a block diagram of an arrangement of components that includes a test signal generator 61, a piezoelectric (PZ) stretcher 59, and an in-line fiber etalon (ILFE) sensor 32A (col. 4, lines 51 – 55). Stress is induced in ILFE sensor 32A by applying a voltage from test signal generator 61 to PZ stretcher 59 (col. 4, lines 51 – 55).

The Office Action, on page 3, suggests that the application of the voltage from test signal generator 61 to PZ stretcher 59 to induce the stress in ILFE sensor 32A is descriptive of intermittently providing a load signal to an optical component. However, the Putnam et al. patent does not further describe the voltage from test signal generator 61, and therefore does not describe the voltage as being periodic. Consequently, the Putnam et al. patent does not disclose providing a load signal to an optical component, wherein the **load signal is periodic**, and has a **period** having a time interval during which the load signal is present at the optical component, and a time interval during which the load signal is not present, as recited in claim 1. Thus, the Putnam et al. patent does not anticipate claim 1.

Claim 2 is canceled, and as such, the rejection thereof is rendered moot.

Claims 12 includes a recital similar to that of claim 1, described above. Thus, claim 12, for reasoning similar to that provided in support of claim 1, is novel over the Putnam et al. patent.

Claim 13 depends from claim 12, and further recites that a load source comprises a load bank composed of at least two loading sources for composing the load signal by at least two loading signals spaced in optical frequency. The Putnam et al. patent mentions reflections R1 and R2 (col. 1, lines 28 – 30), but Applicant believes R1 and R2 are two reflections of a single source signal, and therefore have the same frequency. The Putnam et al. patent does not appear to disclose a signal composed of two signals spaced in optical frequency. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the Putnam et al. patent does not disclose that a load source comprises a load bank composed of at least two loading sources for composing the load signal by at least **two loading signals spaced in optical frequency**, as recited in claim 13. Thus, Applicant further submits that claim 13 is novel over the Putnam et al. patent, by virtue of claim 13 being dependent on claim 12, and also on its own merits.

Claim 20 includes a recital similar to that of claim 1, described above. Thus, claim 20, for reasoning similar to that provided in support of claim 1, is novel over the Putnam et al. patent.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 102(b) rejection of claims 1, 2, 12, 13 and 20.

The Office Action, on page 3, near the bottom of the page, takes issue with the use of "adapted" in claim 20. Applicant is amending claim 20 to delete the use of "adapted."

As mentioned above, Applicant is clarifying an aspect of claims 1, 12 and 20 that is neither disclosed by nor inherently present in the Putnam et al. patent. Applicant is also amending all of the claims for one or more of (a) correcting an indefinite recital, (b) providing consistent terminology, (c) ensuring an antecedent basis for terms, (d) improving grammar, or (e) deleting recitals that do not appear to be necessary for patentability.

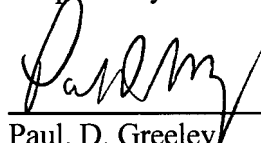
Applicant is adding claims 21 - 25 to even further provide the claim coverage that Applicant appears to deserve based on the prior art that was cited by the Examiner. A favorable consideration that also results in the allowance of claims 21 - 25 is earnestly solicited.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims presented in this application patentably distinguish over the prior art. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and that this application be passed to allowance.

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Date

Respectfully submitted,



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